

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

I Claim:

1. (Currently Amended) A hitch assembly ~~consisting essentially of~~ comprising:
 - (a) a coupling tongue with a first end and a second end, and a top and a bottom, the coupling tongue further comprising a first aperture sized to engage a coupling pin at the first end, and second aperture sized to engage a hitch pin at the second end, the second aperture extending between the top and the bottom of the coupling tongue;
 - (b) a U-shaped clevis with a first clevis end and a second clevis end, ~~that is the U-shaped clevis being significantly wider than it is thick and hence~~ substantially flat in cross section ~~and that consists of~~; the U-shaped clevis further comprising an aperture at the first clevis end and an aperture at the second clevis end, the aperture at the first clevis end being positioned above the second aperture of the coupling tongue and the aperture at the second clevis end being positioned below the second aperture of the coupling tongue, said U-shaped clevis being pivotally coupled to the second end of the coupling tongue with the hitch pin[[.]]; and
 - (c) an opening formed by the coupling tongue and the U-shaped clevis, sized to receive a towing member.
2. (Currently Amended) The hitch assembly of claim[[1]] 27, wherein the steel hitch pin is further comprised of 4140 hot-rolled steel.

3. (Currently Amended) The hitch assembly of claim 1 further comprising ~~a wear plate at either end~~ wear plates on inside surfaces of the first and second clevis ends of the U-shaped clevis in the areas where the hitch pin is inserted.
4. (Currently Amended) The hitch assembly of claim 1 further comprising a sling adapter having a curved surface disposed in a closed end of the U-shaped clevis.
5. (Currently Amended) The hitch assembly of claim 3 further comprising a sling adapter disposed in the U-shaped clevis.
6. (Original) The hitch assembly of claim 1 comprised partially of aluminum alloy.
7. (Original) The hitch assembly of claim 3 comprised partially of aluminum alloy.
8. (Original) The hitch assembly of claim 1 wherein the coupling tongue is comprised of aluminum alloy.
9. (Original) The hitch assembly of claim 3 wherein the coupling tongue is comprised of aluminum alloy.
10. (Currently Amended) The hitch assembly of claim 1 wherein the U-shaped clevis is comprised of aluminum alloy.

11. (Currently Amended) The hitch assembly of claim 3 wherein the U-shaped clevis is comprised of aluminum alloy.

12. (Currently Amended) The hitch assembly of claim 1 wherein the coupling tongue and the U-shaped clevis are comprised of aluminum alloy.

13. (Currently Amended) The hitch assembly of claim[[2]] 27 wherein the coupling tongue and the U-shaped clevis are comprised of aluminum alloy.

14. (Currently Amended) The hitch assembly of claim 3 wherein the coupling tongue and the U-shaped clevis are comprised of aluminum alloy.

15. (Currently Amended) A method of towing a vehicle in need of being towed, said method comprising:

- (a) providing a hitch assembly as claimed in claim 1,
- (b) mounting the hitch assembly into a receiver[[of]] on one of: the vehicle or a tow vehicle;
- (c) inserting a towing member through the opening of the hitch assembly;
- (d) attaching the towing member to the other of: the vehicle or the tow vehicle, and
- (e) applying sufficient force to the towing member with the tow vehicle to tow the vehicle in need of being towed.

16. (Currently Amended) A method of towing a vehicle in need of being towed, said method comprising:

- (a) providing a hitch assembly as claimed in claim[[2]] 27,
- (b) mounting the hitch assembly into a receiver[[of]] on one of: the vehicle or a tow vehicle;
- (c) inserting a towing member through the opening of the hitch assembly;
- (d) attaching the towing member to the other of: the vehicle or the tow vehicle, and
- (e) applying sufficient force to the towing member with the tow vehicle to tow the vehicle in need of being towed.

17. (Currently Amended) A method of towing a vehicle in need of being towed, said method comprising:

- (a) providing a hitch assembly as claimed in claim 3,
- (b) mounting the hitch assembly into a receiver[[of]] on one of: the vehicle or a tow vehicle;
- (c) inserting a towing member through the opening of the hitch assembly;
- (d) attaching the towing member to the other of: the vehicle or the tow vehicle, and
- (e) applying sufficient force to the towing member with the tow vehicle to tow the vehicle in need of being towed.

18. (Currently Amended) A method of towing a vehicle in need of being towed, said method comprising:

- (a) providing a hitch assembly as claimed in claim 12,
- (b) mounting the hitch assembly into a receiver[[of]] on one of: the vehicle or a tow vehicle;
- (c) inserting a towing member through the opening of the hitch assembly;

- (d) attaching the towing member to the other of: the vehicle or the tow vehicle, and
- (e) applying sufficient force to the towing member with the tow vehicle to tow the vehicle in need of being towed.

19. (Currently Amended) A method of towing a vehicle in need of being towed, said method comprising:

- (a) providing a hitch assembly as claimed in claim 13,
- (b) mounting the hitch assembly into a receiver[[of]]on one of: the vehicle or a tow vehicle;
- (c) inserting a towing member through the opening of the hitch assembly;
- (d) attaching the towing member to the other of: the vehicle or the tow vehicle, and
- (e) applying sufficient force to the towing member with the tow vehicle to tow the vehicle in need of being towed.

20. (Currently Amended) A method of towing a vehicle in need of being towed, said method comprising:

- (a) providing a hitch assembly as claimed in claim 14,
- (b) mounting the hitch assembly into a receiver[[of]]on one of: the vehicle or a tow vehicle;
- (c) inserting a towing member through the opening of the hitch assembly;
- (d) attaching the towing member to the other of: the vehicle or the tow vehicle, and
- (e) applying sufficient force to the towing member with the tow vehicle to tow the vehicle in need of being towed.

21. (New) The hitch assembly of claim 1 wherein the U-shaped clevis is comprised of a solid, rectangular bar bent into the U-shape.

22. (New) A hitch assembly comprising:

- a coupling tongue comprising:

- a first end;

- a second end;

- a hitch pin aperture at the second end extending between a top and a bottom of the coupling tongue;

- a U-shaped clevis formed from a rectangular aluminum bar, the U-shaped clevis comprising:

- a first clevis leg having a first clevis aperture in a first clevis end;

- a second clevis leg having a second clevis aperture in a second clevis end, the second clevis leg spaced apart from the first clevis leg;

- a curved end connecting the first clevis leg and the second clevis leg;

- the U-shaped clevis being significantly wider than it is thick, such that it is flat in cross-section;

- an open end formed between the first clevis end and the second clevis end;

- wherein the open end of the clevis is sized to receive the second end of the coupling tongue such that the first clevis leg and the second clevis leg overlies the top and the bottom of the coupling tongue, and the first clevis aperture, the hitch pin aperture, and the second clevis aperture are axially aligned;

a hitch pin comprised of steel extending through the axially aligned first clevis aperture, hitch pin aperture, and second clevis aperture, the hitch pin pivotally attaching the coupling tongue and the U-shaped clevis.

23. (New) The hitch assembly of claim 22, wherein the U-shaped clevis is comprised of a single piece of solid aluminum bar stock bent into the U-shape, forming a weldless and seamless U-shaped clevis.

24. (New) The hitch assembly of claim 22, wherein the U-shaped clevis is further comprised of a solid aluminum alloy.

25. (New) The hitch assembly of claim 22, wherein the coupling tongue is comprised of aluminum alloy.

26. (New) The hitch assembly of claim 22, wherein the hitch pin is further comprised of AISI hot-rolled steel.

27 (New) The hitch assembly of claim 1, wherein the hitch pin is comprised of steel.